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Speaking Points

The Honourable Tony Clement, PC, MP
Minister of Industry
Minister Responsible for FedNor

G8 Infrastructure Announcement

Parry Sound, Ontario
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Check Against Delivery

Thank you very much for the kind introduction, Mayor Adams.

Our government recognizes the significance of the G8 Summit coming to Canada. Not only is it an honour to host this prestigious event, it is also an opportunity to showcase Canada, and in particular, Parry Sound–Muskoka.

That's why our government is working hard to ensure that all parts of Parry Sound–Muskoka are ready to host this event next summer.

It is wonderful to be here today to share with you a few of the ways in which we are preparing the Town of Parry Sound for the G8 Summit.

I am pleased to announce that our government is committing nearly $1.3 million in new spending that will add beauty to our town for many years to come.

Those of us who know Parry Sound as "The Gateway to the Rainbow Country" will also know that Seguin Street and Market Square Park are at the heart of Parry Sound.

We are making these great places even better by upgrading Seguin Street and enhancing the Park with new lighting for the concert stage and adding a large granite stone for Bowes Street, to name a few of the improvements.

In just about a year from now, with the eyes of the world focused on our region, G8 infrastructure investments such as this one will be crucial to making this significant international event a success — but also in making the most of this fantastic opportunity to showcase this region to the world.

The 2010 G8 Summit will see our region host thousands of people from all over the globe — and generate millions of dollars in economic activity.

This prestigious event will introduce millions of potential tourists to the many attractions of the Muskoka region.

That is why our government has set aside $50 million specifically for G8-related projects, such as the ones we're announcing here today.

These initiatives are going to generate economic activity and jobs, and strengthen the region for a long time to come.

It is likely that much of the agenda at the G8 Muskoka summit will deal with the economy. This is a difficult time for many communities right across Canada.

The Government of Canada has recognized these challenges, and that is why we have implemented an Economic Action Plan, which will see us through this economic downturn so we will emerge even stronger.

Our government's objective is to help make Canada more innovative, modern and competitive on the world stage, and the Economic Action Plan will help us meet those goals.

To be a destination that competes for tourism dollars with the rest of the country, if not the world, northern Ontario communities and businesses must offer exceptional experiences exceeding consumer expectations.

Nationally, the tourism industry contributes about 2 percent annually to the gross domestic product. While that amount may sound small, as a region that benefits from beautiful natural surroundings and attracts tourists, we know how important tourism dollars can be.

Success in tourism depends on commitment, time and resources. Today, our government is delivering some resources to lend a hand.

Now, more than ever, it is important to invest in strengthening our tourism offerings and attracting visitors with the right marketing messages.

For example, through FedNor, we have made significant investments in the tourism industry and in other industries vital to northern Ontario.

Investing in infrastructure projects and tourism will help stimulate the economy, create jobs, and build a brighter and more prosperous future for all Northerners.

As I have said, and it bears repeating, we live in one of the most scenic places in Canada.

The big challenge is getting the word out that this area is a great place to visit with lots to do and the friendliest people in Canada. With the G8 Summit coming we are committed to getting that message across to the world next June.

Parry Sound will be ready for the G8 Summit next summer and I look forward to working with you to help make this happen!

Thank you. And I can now take your questions.

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